

# **LAKE NORMAN STATE PARK PARK PROFILE**

## **PARK PURPOSE STATEMENT**

Lake Norman was developed for hydropower and other electrical power purposes by Duke Power Company under a license granted by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. In 1962, Duke Power Company donated 1,328 acres to contribute to the welfare of the people of North Carolina and to provide them with recreation benefits by establishing a state park along the shore of Lake Norman. The deed transferring title to the state includes restrictions that the land be used and maintained as a state park. Subsequent acquisition and development with Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund assistance requires that the park be retained and used for public outdoor recreation purposes.

Lake Norman is an important statewide recreational resource. As North Carolina's largest man-made lake, it covers a surface area of approximately 32,510 acres. Lake Norman State Park provides public access to Lake Norman for water-based recreational activities and a variety of recreational activities compatible with park resources, including day-use activities such as hiking, swimming, boating, picnicking and natural-resource interpretation, as well as a range of overnight recreational opportunities. Lake Norman State Park also affords outstanding scenic vistas of the open water and shoreline of Lake Norman. The park's undeveloped acreage is in contrast to developed areas along much of Lake Norman's 520-mile shoreline.

The park contains the largest undeveloped acreage in public ownership along Lake Norman. Its relatively undeveloped wildlife habitats include both aquatic and terrestrial environments. These habitats offer opportunities for wildlife observation and environmental education. The effects of disturbance and succession are also evidenced throughout the park.

Although the Catawba River Valley has statewide archaeological significance, Lake Norman State Park has not undergone a thorough archaeological study. At this time, the only known significant archaeological resources are Native American burial sites. Geologically, the park contains good representative examples of typical rock types and weathering processes found in the Piedmont. Small areas of somewhat unusual rock, quartzite and amphibolite are present.

Lake Norman State Park exists as a state park primarily because of its important recreational and scenic values. The Division of Parks and Recreation is charged with preserving these and other values and providing park experiences that promote pride in and understanding of North Carolina's natural heritage.

## **PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME**

**Outdoor Aquatic Recreation:** The purpose of the park is to provide public access to Lake Norman, North Carolina's largest man-made lake. Under the umbrella of aquatic recreation, activities can be developed on water safety, water quality and water conservation.

## STATISTICS

Visitation (1999)	378,417
Operating Budget (FY 98-99)	\$ 295,329
Revenue (FY 99-00)	\$ 61,938

## VISITOR FACILITIES

Picnic area (67 tables and shelter)	Primitive group camping (2 sites)
3 Hiking trails (7.5 miles total)	Swimming area (33-acre lake, bathhouse, refreshment stand)
Boat launch (Lake Norman)	Boat rental (rowboat, canoe, pedal boat)
Drinking water	Tent & trailer camping (33 sites with showers, dumpstation, no hookups)
Lake fishing	
Community building	

## CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION NEEDS

1	The <b>new swimming beach</b> project will construct a new swimming beach on Lake Norman. Other parts of the project are an access road; parking; gate; picnic tables, grills and cans; seeding and landscaping; extension of electric, water and telephone lines; water and septic systems; 12 table shelter; 12 table shelter with toilets; residence; standard toilet building; and life guard equipment and buoy lines.	\$ 2,510,922
2	The <b>subimpoundment water quality/engineering study</b> project will determine if any practical steps can be taken to improve water quality in the subimpoundment.	63,901
3	The <b>road to eliminate inholdings</b> project will eliminate 2 interior gates and a thoroughfare, thereby increasing park security and public safety.	597,155
4	The <b>visitor center/district office</b> project will construct a standard visitor center with district module, exhibit dioramas, office equipment and furniture. Site preparation and extension of water and electric lines are also included.	2,964,621
5	The <b>dock and access</b> project will construct a dock with handicap access at the community building.	129,928
6	The <b>parkwide building repairs</b> project will repair 15 structures needing renovation as detailed by the FIIP inspection and will include handicap access to washrooms.	107,866
7	The <b>water system repairs</b> project calls for repairs to the park's outdated water systems.	162,688
8	The <b>rental cabins</b> project will build 25 cabins with equipment and furnishings, 2 multi-purpose courts, 2 floating piers, an access road, tot lot, parking, septic system and utilities.	4,818,632
9	The <b>ranger residence</b> project will build a residence in order to provide public security for the proposed campground. Project includes site preparation, driveway, water and electric extension, septic system and landscaping.	211,426
10	The <b>campground construction</b> project will provide 105 new campsites with water and electric hookups, roads, gate, amphitheater, washhouse and all utilities.	2,882,645

11	The <b>landscape improvements at subimpoundment/beach</b> project will provide a play area, extend the docks, add 40 rental boats/canoes, provide a canopy for boat storage, provide rip rap protection at park launch ramp, fence the lower level of beach, extend telephone and electric lines and demolish, remove and replace the boat ramps.	560,018
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>\$15,009,802</b>

## REGISTERED NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS

Lake Norman State Park currently has no Registered Natural Heritage Areas.

## POTENTIAL ADDITIONS TO REGISTERED NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS

**Mesic Mixed Hardwood Slopes and Bottomlands/Wetlands:** The relatively high quality and diversity of the plant communities in this area above the park lake on Norwood Creek merit consideration for registry. This area has potential for rare animal populations, such as the four-toed salamander. This area also has potential interpretational and educational uses.

**Northern Island on Lake Norman:** This island supports high quality Dry Oak-Hickory and Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Forests. It also supports limited Mesic Mixed Hardwood Forest. Although even-aged, these communities are diverse and relatively mature, with canopy species ranging from 21 inches to 24 inches in diameter. The herb layer includes large populations of Catesby's trillium, purple toadshade and may-apple.

**Southern Island on Lake Norman:** This island has high quality Dry Oak-Hickory and Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory communities that support numerous large, mature trees, including a 32-inch diameter scarlet oak, a 28-inch diameter chestnut oak and several white oaks over 20 inches in diameter. Species diversity is high in all strata and the south and southwestern facing slopes have a strong graminoid component not seen elsewhere in the park. The island is dissected by a powerline right-of-way, producing the expected disturbance species; otherwise the overall quality of the communities is high.

**Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Forest:** The peninsula at the extreme southern end of the park supports a Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Forest of high quality. In spite of significant disturbance by Hurricane Hugo, there are numerous white oaks greater than 18 inches in diameter, as well as a 20-inch post oak, a 23-inch beech, a 25-inch black oak, a 33-inch northern red oak and 19-inch scarlet oak. The ridgetop grades into Dry Oak-Hickory Forest with an increased shortleaf pine component. Overall the diversity is high for this community type.

**Piedmont Monadnock Forest:** Although not very large in size, the quality and uniqueness of this community in the park and immediate surrounding area warrant registry. The size of the area limits, but does not preclude, the potential for rare species.

**Piedmont/Coastal Plain Heath Bluff:** This is a relatively small community on the eastern side of the park but it is unique within the park and of high quality. The area grades into a Dry Oak-Hickory Forest community that may have included a Dry Pine Variant prior to human disturbance.

## FUTURE LAND ACQUISITION NEEDS

Completion of the Lake Norman State Park master plan will require the acquisition of 166 acres. Acquisition priorities include acreage to control access, provide for facilities development and allow for increased scenic and water protection. Acquisition of the peninsula to the east of the existing park has been dropped from acquisition plans due to its recent subdividing and development.

Master Plan Total Acreage	1,635 acres
Current Park Acreage	<u>1,469 acres</u>
<b>Acquisition Needs</b>	<b>166 acres</b>

## 2000 STAFF POSITIONS

Permanent		Seasonal		Peak Load	
Park Superintendent III	1	Park Attendant	2	Park Attendant	2
Park Ranger III	1	Bathhouse Manager I	1	Bathhouse Operator	1
Park Ranger II	1	Chief Lifeguard	1	Lifeguard	1
Maintenance Mechanic III	1	Lifeguard	5	Refreshment Stand Clerk	1
General Utility Worker	1	Refreshment Stand Manager I	1		
Office Assistant III	1	General Utility Worker	2		

## PROPOSED STAFF ADDITIONS

Permanent	Seasonal	Peak Load